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VINTAGES, OLD AND NEW.

THE true wine-yielding vine, the *Vitis vinifera*, is grown over an immense range of latitudes, but its products vary to a surprising extent. It is impossible to predict what the crop will be, under any given conditions of sun and soil. The plant has delicate perceptions, is affected by impulses beyond the scrutiny of our grosser faculties, and appears to take a capricious pleasure in upsetting our most sapient calculations. Thus, if you select a light soil and a sunshiny hillside in Central Europe, you can doubtless form your vineyard, and produce your wine; but the value is as vague as if it depended on the drawing of a lottery. Care and skill can do much to increase the amount, little or nothing to improve the quality; indeed, an imperial commission has decided in France, that a system of higher farming has injured the flavour, while adding to the yield, of the modern wines. Any apparent trifle may stamp the destiny of a grape: a particular aspect, an accidental amount of shelter, the colour of the earth, a slight percentage, more or less, of silicious or aluminous mould, a sprinkling of calcareous particles, or the shadow of a rock. But vines are quite feline in their strong local attachments; let them once find a 'location' suited to their whimsical fancies, and they will thrive, and yield wine fit for princely palates, and fill all Europe with the renown of some patch of stony upland that stands sponsor to the famous *cru*.

There is that Johannisberg vineyard of the Metternichs, that sends forth its wondrous cabinet wine, worth, I am afraid to say, how many florins a bottle. The aspect is good; the terraced fronts are skilfully arranged so as to make the most of the Rhineland sun; and the soil is a crumbling red sandstone. But other vineyards, not far off, have an equally good site, and are terraced, and banked, and cared for, and have a soil of crumbling red sandstone too; nor can any one comprehend why the Metternich wine should be worth five times the price of its neighbours, or what is the subtle distinction which makes a few poor acres of red earth as valuable as a coal-mine. So in Spain.

Amontillado distils its topaz-hued blood from a grape rooted in a glaring white soil, chalky and barren to look upon. Travellers with an inquisitive turn have been known to gather pinches of this white earth, and carry it home for an analysis; and an inorganic chemist can tell them accurately enough how much of carbonate of lime, how much silica, how much fine clay, are in the little heap; but he cannot explain why the most delicate wine of Spain has its birthplace on that dazzling soil. So far as we can judge, the ancients must have sipped but an indifferent beverage, in spite of all their enthusiasm, or else the classic vine must have degenerated as pitifully as the classic arts and arms. The Vino d'Oro of Lebanon is perhaps equal to passable Marsala; the Tenedos grape-juice, ruby-red, and fair to look upon, is but a coarse country wine; Greece and Thrace, Asia Minor and the Isles, afford very inferior tipples to Levantine consumers.

There are still a few who affect to relish Cyprus wine, perhaps because old James I. brought it into fashion; perhaps because the Crusaders drank it; possibly for its own merits, in spite of its corked twang and violent astringency. India has many wines, each one nastier than its congener; the yellow Chinese wine grown in Yunnan has a musky flavour, not odious to some few palates, but it will not compete with the humblest growths of Europe; and travellers in Persia wonder how Hafiz could have warbled with such delicious fire on the indifferent stimulus which his native vineyards yielded him. But, after all, that straw-coloured Shiraz, with its family-likeness to Teneriffe, at 2s. 9d.—that purple Ispahan, more resembling strong Aragonese wine than any French product, are the best that Asia can supply. The vine reserves her choicest favours for European gourmets, and prefers a temperate region to one with sharp and sudden transitions from heat to cold. The Greeks were the first in this continent to cultivate the vine, to crop the heavy clusters of blooming grapes, to trample with bare feet in the deep vat, amid the spouting blood of Bacchus, to leave the wondrous liquor to ferment, and then to

fill the cask, and seal the jar, and store away the *amphores* that held the crimson nectar. Whatever may have been the true merit of their vintage, their neighbours valued it highly. It was in Grecian wine, no doubt, that Cleopatra pledged Antony. The Great King had his cellar stocked with the rich liquor of Hellas; and cupbearer and butler, all whose duties connected them with wine, were Greeks. Rome drew much of her wine from the Greek marts; and vintner and tavern-keeper, and tapster and page, subalterns in the army of Bacchus, were Greeks too.

But the vine was grown in Italy long before Romulus, and Spain and Carthage had wherewithal to make merry, ages before Herodotus put pen to papyrus. We need scarcely, however, envy the ancients their revelries. Some of their wines were sour, others mawkishly sweet; many were atrociously muddy and thick—syrops rather than wines. To this day, there are strong red and amber-coloured wines in Central Asia, whose consistency is that of imbecile jelly, and which require to be eaten rather than drunk. If we may trust those kind historians who now and then interrupt the grand pageant of combats and coronations to give us a peep at the social life of the dead world, many a Roman emperor, many a purple-filleted Caesar, had his gemmed cup filled with such a glutinous production as this. Imagine Ovid on the Danube sawing his frozen wine into blocks, chopping the dusky mass with hatchets, thawing the red lumps in hot water, and swallowing deep draughts of the tepid abomination, as he bewailed his cruel exile, and flattered the monarch to whom he owed it!

Our large-limbed ancestors, in conquering the worn-out Roman empire, learned for the first time the taste of wine; henceforth, it was the choicest element in their rude Gothic feasts, supplanting ale, taking precedence of the bright honey drink, and throwing cider and usquebaugh into the cold shade of neglect. Moreover, in spite of a climate more severe than we now experience, they contrived to transplant the vine to the banks of the Rhine and Elbe, Neckar and Main, nay, of the Tyne itself. England had more than a hundred great vineyards at the time of the Norman Conquest, long since grubbed up and erased from the face of the earth; but the grim pages of Domesday preserve the catalogue, and tradition cherishes a name here and there. They are no mighty loss; marvellously thin and sour, a kind of incomplete vinegar must have been the wine they afforded in the moist and cloudy climate of eight hundred years ago.

Even then, in spite of civil commotion and Danish wars, the England of Edward the Confessor, with a population about equal to that of London in our own time, bought many a cask of French and Spanish grape-juice, and the Normans were good customers to Gascon vine-growers. But they were poor and thin potatoes, those oceans of *vin ordinaire* which were freighted for the London market on board of Rochelle smacks and Bordeaux galliots; those casks that were set abroad in the banquet-halls of kings; those rosy fountains that spouted in the streets on coronation-days, the centre of a guzzling multitude of brawling revellers.

Fashion had always a veto in the selection of the national beverage. Thus, the dandies of the Plantagenet reigns drank Bordeaux in time of peace, and Burgundy in time of war, when they got their liquor economically out of French cellars. Then the

English were driven out of France, and the Tudor dynasty presided over a people in love with the fiery blood of Spanish wines. Those were the days of Canaries and Sherries, of Andalusian growths, and importations from Tenerife, and when the wonderful Sack, which rolled so luscious a flood through Shakspeare's dialogues, became the staple of an entertainment. Sack had steadily improved, if not in quality, at least in price. A quart of this genial beverage cost but sixpence in Edward III.'s reign; it was worth at least twice as much under Elizabeth. James I. had a classic taste in drink as well as in learning, and imbibed a great deal of strong Greek wine; and we may be pretty sure that a good many of his attached henchmen and hangers-on, lay and clerical, swore by Cyprus and Chios. We owe our Port wine, long esteemed a recognised British institution, to Queen Catharine of Braganza. And now, under Mr Gladstone's tutelage, we are to go back to our old attachment to exceedingly light Bordeaux.

The wheel of progress has not stood still in the matters of vine-growing and wine-making. There is more of science, care, and cleanliness in the new manufacture than in the old; there are actually vineyard proprietors who comprehend the laws of fermentation, instead of trusting to the rough rule of thumb that guided their ancestors. The grapes are often squeezed in a less primitive mode than by the trampling of a dozen barefooted Strephons. It is only the most ignorant growers who fling all the grapes, good, bad, and indifferent, whole ripe, half ripe, and rotten, into the same seething vat, to take their chance of turning out well. In the best vineyards, there is a competitive examination among the clusters, a testing and weighing, a minute and careful scrutiny, and a subdivision according to qualities, utterly unlike the haphazard method of the good old times.

Now a days, too, there is a systematic attention to such technicalities as 'racking,' and 'fining,' and 'disgorging,' which saves much wine from metamorphosing itself into vinegar; while artificial refrigeration preserves many thousand flasks of Champagne from exploding in the heats of summer. The latter is one of the most troublesome scions of the great Bacchic family. Other wines get their probationary period snugly accomplished in the wood, and need but one bottling and a single series of corks; but Champagne, with its high animal spirits and restless nature, declines to submit to the usual dull routine, spends but two or three years within hoops, and requires, when bottled, to be recorced within a few months, to part with its muddy lees, and to receive a wholesome tonic of sugar-candy dissolved in wine. Then come the ramming home of the 'cork,' the wiring down, the sheathing in that lead-foil whose silvery lustre gives half its charm to the royal wine of Rheims. All this is hard and expensive work; and when to this are added the breakages, ranging from the mild ten per cent. of showery summers, to the appalling havoc of comet years, when the precious flasks detonate like volleying musketry, we can scarcely grumble at the cost of good Champagne; and yet the wine is to be had for some six-and-thirty shillings a dozen, bottles included; and very refreshing rhubarb it is in hot weather, and for uncritical consumers, while the graceful necks glitter as temptingly when the beverage is turnip-juice, as when they shine over the Widow Cliquot's best.

It is not difficult to make tolerable Champagne of other wines; a Belgian chemist used to be peculiarly skilful in this bibulous alchemy, turning the sweet white wine of Tours, mawkish stuff in its crude state, into bubbling frothing nectar, that leaped up like a Niagara in the glasses. Carbonic acid gas was the talisman that ennobled the *roturier* grape juice of Tours into the dancing elixir of Epernay. In default of a better, the cork often affords a useful criterion to the contents of a bottle. Good wine may need no bush, but bad wine is not commonly set off by a cork of high quality. There are many stoppers which give a note of warning, as it were, at the first insertion of the screw; and when we are confronted by a rotten cork, or a damaged cork, or, worse still, by a woody, harsh, obstinate cork, we may generally give a condemnatory verdict on the potation which is so shabbily guarded. A rotten cork may prove an illusive beacon, to be sure, for some wines corrode their stoppers cruelly; but when did an honest generous liquor follow the sullen and reluctant extraction of a harsh ligneous cork? Italian wines, owing perhaps to the saccharine juices they are so rich in, shew a noble contempt for the confinement to which their northern compeers must submit. How picturesque they are, those great bulbous flasks of purple Aleatico, or straw-tinted Montefiascone, ample of girth, and classic of form, and simply sealed by a tea-spoonful of olive oil, and a scrap of cotton wool! How easily and quietly, as befits the sultry air and languid climate, is the oil tilted out, and the liquid ruby impressed into the service of man! No tiresome selection of corkscrews, no careful insertion of the subtle spiral, no smart jerk, no desperate tug, no savage wrench! Italian wines never obtained much favour in England—the distance was long, and the freight heavy; but I am inclined to think that some Ausonian growths have merits that would make their way. Central Italy has three or four good sound red wines of unutterable cheapness; the green Vernum and Vede are choice friends to a thirsty throat; Lacryma Christi is a grand beverage, more talked of than actually sipped; and Marsala, the true unbranded Marsala, that you buy in Italy, is worthy of Lord Nelson's honest commendation. Nelson discovered Marsala, as the Marshal Duke de Richelieu disclosed to the court of Versailles that Bordeaux might be worth a king's degustation. There is a Piedmontese wine yet lacking a sponsor—never, perhaps, having paid tribute in the London docks—the innocent frothing Asti; a good wine, in spite of the irreverent comparisons which liken it to ginger-pop and British gooseberry, and the importation of which into England in hot weather should assuredly make a wine-merchant's fortune.

The eastern seaboard of the Adriatic produces but one decent wine, Malvoisie, the real old chivalric Malvoisie that forms the *refrain* to so many middle-aged drinking-songs. This is a very various liquor, reasonably good when bought at Zara and Ragusa, but a mere turnip-complexioned synonym for vinegar, when sipped at a Croatian hostelry. But it is a pity that Hungarian wines, so delicate and eke so fiery, should be so little known in England. If ever Hungary should obtain parliamentary government, and freedom of trade, and a marine and seaport of her own, Mr Bull may probably become a good customer to the Magyar vineyards. Menescher is preferred to Burgundy, by some connoisseurs at least; and both the golden

and blood-red varieties possess a body and fire that remind one of Portugal vintages. As for Ruster, it is simply a dainty Sherry, Amontillado in Hungarian garb, and at the price which we Great Britons pay for coarse burning Lisbons and Mountains, and other branded decoctions. As for Tokay, the Kron Tokayer, that imperial liquor can never be a wine for the million. Even at Vienna, you are never certain to obtain it, and may think yourself fortunate if you can transmute a handful of florins into one of those peculiar flasks, long-necked, globular, and much resembling a tulip root, which contains about a pint of the mahogany-coloured monarch of wines. And, after all, it must be the rarity that lends its charm to this sweet, thick, heady syrup. If it were cheap, should we any of us care for it? As it is, the two vineyards that produce it, the Esterhazy and the Palfi, both the property of princely houses, are besieged by agents from half the crowned heads, Russian boyards, New York merchants, and hotel-keepers of Christendom. Austria has good wines too, though lacking the excellence of those of Hungary; but Prussia is essentially a land of beer, although the vine will grow as far north as Königsberg itself. The great valleys of the Rhine and the Moselle furnish a hundred distinct growths—the yellow Rhenish, and the green Moselwein, adorned with queer titles drawn from Apes' valleys, and Scarlet mountains, and Donkey houses, which bewilder the wanderers of Cockaigne. But, as a rule, Rhine affords the wholesomer wine; for Moselle needs much sulphur to keep it in condition, and is a smaller and sourer tap in general. To catalogue the more deserving members of this grand Teutonic tribe, would take much space. Why relate, for instance, how the Stein or Stone wein, that most of us only know in its quaint flasks, is grown on a conventual rock—how the genial Liebfraumilch owes its virtue to the friendly shelter of a wall—and how the Frontignac grape can only yield a slight suspicion of Muscat flavour, to the entreaties of the pale German sun. Further on, in Belgium, there are light wines of no unpleasant taste, grown in the valleys of the Maese, near to that Namur where Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim campaigned, and used strong language. But the growths of Huy, Dinant, Namur, are chiefly used for diluting the Bordeaux and Angevin wines which Antwerp and Rotterdam import largely. When we enter France, we must go a long way before we meet with any wine of note.

The coast north of the estuary of the Loire adheres to cider like our own western counties. Alsace is true to beer. Champagne is the most hyperborean of wine-growing districts; and then we get to Burgundy, where every town gives name to a variety, and where, if you wish to pass for an agreeable and well-informed Briton, you must sit down in the *salle* of an inn, and talk about *oidium*. So we pass on, from mild Tonnerre to nutty Nuits; from comfortable violet-tinged Macon to pink Pomard, reposing like an invalid in its basket-work cradle; to mighty Chambertin, Napoleon's potent favourite; to the dull amber of Chablis, the costly ruby of Clos Voogot, the hoary vintage of Montrachet, the cheery smack of Beaune. The Rhone tempts us with the St Peray of the south, a wine with a strong family-likeness to Champagne, and not unworthy to take rank with its more celebrated kinsman; and the ecclesiastical Château Neuf du Pape, which unites the demerits of several distinct

growths. Provence and Languedoc, and the eastern Pyrenees in general, are richer in olives than in good vineyards; but strong St George is mighty enough to deserve the patronage of its dragon-slaying sponsor, and rough Roussillon puts in its claim for a fair share of the world's good opinion. Bearn has its white Jurançon, a costly wine, peculiar to one valuable vineyard, and some drops of which were poured into the baby-mouth of Henry IV. of France by his warlike old grandfather, after ancient Navarrese custom. Muscat and Rivesaltes, Lunel and Frontignac, are these not also natives of the southern plains of Gaul? It would need much space to do justice to the Gironde—to the peninsulars and delta of the Garonne and Loire, to all those ugly, scrubby, invaluable vineyards which give red seas of Claret and Rochelle, to which we owe Médoc and their saintships Julien and Emilion, and Estèphe, and soft Larose, and lordly Lafitte, and Château Margaux the sublime.

Can a few lines serve to chronicle the growths of Bordelais and Perigord, of Saumur, Angers, and Rochelle? Or crossing the Bidassoa, can I hope to give even a faint idea of the many Spanish and Lusitanian wines hitherto unknown to British palates: to discourse of Rota with its rosy bloom; of Tinto, Alicante, Calceavella; of Manzaniilla, the straw-coloured; and of the strong red and black wines of Aragon, ludicrously cheap, wonderfully full-bodied, and bought up by speculative distillers for transmutation into brandy? Can I describe in such brief space the manufacture of Port, and how the husks and stalks are left to steep in the seething purple vat, to give colour and astringency; or how the French growers love oaken casks, because of the *tannin* they impart; or how the finer Clarets are innocently doctored with Hermitage—a wine more expensive than that whose constitution it mends; and the inferior growths are sometimes villainously hocussed with lime, and gypsum, and sugar of lead, to check their innate propensity for turning into downright vinegar? Have I elbow-room to write the history of the *oidium*, that grisly blight which spread over England like a canker, eating into the purple clusters of the grape as they loaded the tree in tempting promise, carrying ruin and despair to hundreds of thousands, threatening the extirpation of Bacchus, and crossing the Atlantic waves to extinguish Madeira? Poor kingly Madeira, many-voyaged, generous, hot-blooded monarch of wines! it is as a burned comet or lump of jelly, that once was a shooting-star. Yet a little exists in recondite cellars; but fifty years hence, Madeira will be a myth, classed with the blood of St Januarius!

And that amazing Malmsey, that only grew in the valley near Funchal, in the dell where the soil was said to be fertilised by the unblest ashes of burned heretics—that Malmsey, too clear and too sweet for ordinary consumption, and only used to lend a twang of its own glorious flavour to the noblest Madeiras—has that, too, yielded place to the cochineal and yam grounds? The *oidium* has been conquered by sulphur, but it has raised the price of wines for the rest of the century. It even found its way to the Cape, but happily spared the two poetic mountain vineyards sacred to the memory of the Dutch governor's wife, and which produce the red and white Constantia, honoured offshoots of the ancient dynasty of Frontignac. Praise and good-luck to Bacchus and his smiling

race! At their door lie none of those scandals of national drunkenness which ardent spirits bring in their train. A wine-country is, as a rule, a country of sober enjoyments; and we have high authority for thankfully and gratefully accepting this, the kindly gift of Providence to man.

THE CLYFFARDS OF CLYFFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LOST SIR MASSINGBERD,' &c.

CHAPTER XXV.—BY THE SHORT-CUT.

'HERE is your child, my dear, here is little Milly; will you not kiss your child?' were the first words which Mildred heard upon recovering her grief-stricken senses. It was Mrs Carey that uttered them, who had lifted her upon the bed, and was sitting patiently beside it with the little girl in her arms. She laid her precious burden down by the mother's side, and let the round large eyes of the infant do their gracious work.

'I have read that letter, dear,' said she, 'and I do not augur so ill from it as you do.'

Mildred groaned, and put up her hand to hide the torture of her face.

'If this Mr Stevens intended any evil to your husband, it is clear he would not have come home.'

'Come home!' cried Mildred, starting from the pillow with the look of one who, shipwrecked in the tropic seas, beholds from his lonely raft some succouring sail: 'Raymond come home?'

'No, love, not Raymond.'

The rounded arm on which the listener leaned gave sudden way, and with one long-drawn moan, the head sank back upon the pillow.

'But this Stevens has come back, for I have seen him, and even spoken with him. He called here just after you left me on the lawn, and very much surprised he seemed to be at seeing me here. However, that he has returned, instead of taking to flight, as he might easily have done, convinces me that at present no mischief has occurred. And if these warning letters be genuine, we should be now forewarned.'

'What did this man say?' asked Mildred with eyes tight shut, as though to keep out some hideous vision.

'He said your husband bade him look in here on his way back, to remind you that you should be at the Mermaid Cavern by three o'clock to-morrow at latest, if Milly is to see the sea-flowers. Mr Hepburn and he parted company, he said, on Marmouth Down by the Saxon Barrows.'

'Ay, at the grave-side,' said Mildred hoarsely. 'And now he thirsts for this little life and mine.'

'If you have any such foolish fancy, Mildred, you should not go to meet this man.'

'What? disobey my husband's last command? No, my friend; I go to-morrow as he bids me.'

'Then I go with you, Mildred, that is certain; nay, but I do. You are rather obstinate, my dear, yourself just now; but compared with me, when I have made up my mind to anything, you are Docility personified—ask John else. I am not afraid on my own account or yours; but if we have Milly with us, I shall take one of our men from Lucky Bay to help to carry her, if we tire.'

'True friend in need!' cried Mildred; 'my mind seems feeble as my limbs. I cannot think at all, but only suffer. Yet cannot the road be searched where this man went with Raymond, and the—the cliff?'

'That has been done, dear. One of the coast-guard followed them this morning, directly I got your letter. He met Mr Stevens returning, very near the spot where he says he parted with your husband, and then went on as far as (by the time) the two could possibly have gone together, a mile beyond the Beacon, but there was no trace of anything wrong.'

'Thanks, thanks, dear Marion; I have no right to despair, having a friend like you. This little one, too; yes, you are right, she shall not go with us to-morrow.'

'That's a wise woman! Now Mildred is like herself again. But one whole day, and you will have your husband back, I promise you; and in the meantime, fear not this man at all. The lieutenant has had a word from me, and will watch the man as a cat watches a mouse. My husband's honest heart takes all he does not know for good; but being warned, his hand is like a vice to grip the wicked. Woe, bitter woe to him who plots against an unprotected woman and her child beneath John Carey's eyes! This Stevens is a very bold and crafty villain, you would say; but he with whom he has now to deal is keen, although not cunning; and as for boldness, I do indeed believe my husband would, in his shirt-sleeves—in the cause of honour or duty—defy a lion.'

Mrs Carey laughed, but while she spoke, the fire of honest pride glowed in her cheeks and eyes, and made her pleasant face one Glory.

'So, Mildred, without being very brave ourselves, we may rest to-night without fear. Come, you must have some tea, and then to bed; and this young lady, too, must be persuaded to retire, since such late hours are bad for her complexion.'

I think unto the house of sorrow there is no human blessing equal to a breezy-minded woman, tender at heart, but chary of her tears, ready to listen to woe, but not to flatter it, and Martha-like, careful to fulfil the ordinary duties of the house, whatever earthquake may have shaken the pillars of its peace.

The night passed, thanks to Mrs Carey, without alarms; and when the next day, at noon, the two friends set forth upon the inland way, which led by a short-cut to the cliffs above the Mermaid Cavern, the clouds of evil foreboding had thinned, so that a little sunshine straggled through, and found its way to Mildred's heart. It was a lovely walk; the fields, with garments various and rich, were welcoming everywhere the presence of the Spring; the woods had donned their beautiful green robes, and all the incense-breathing earth was bright and glad. Now their road lay through lanes with lofty banks, by nature's lavish hand set thick with flowers, and where overhead the pale sprays of hawthorn upon either side strove hard to kiss; and now it climbed some hill-top, from whence many a mile of pleasant English ground, with hall and hamlet, church-tower and low white farm, wooded their willing eyes.

'This is the third time,' said Mildred apprehensively, when they had gone a considerable distance, 'that looking back I have perceived that man yonder; he pretends to be gathering violets whenever we turn round, but I do not like his following us in this manner. When we pass Mr Jasper's farm, we will step in, and then he must needs miss us.'

'Pooh, pooh, my dear; do not flatter yourself that the gentleman is so interested in our proceed-

ings,' said Mrs Carey laughing; 'see, he has deserted us already, and has taken that path across the fields.'

'I am heartily glad of it, Marion; for now that you have put me in better hope about dear Raymond, I am ashamed to say I begin to be alarmed about ourselves. I almost wish that we had got that escort with us you proposed, in case of our having brought little Milly.'

More lanes, more hills, more beauties on all sides; and now the banks decrease, and become mere rounds of green, and the road dwindles to a turf-track, and presently is lost upon the boundless down. Now, too, the thunder of the unseen sea breaks in upon the inland harmonies, and the scented air grows fresh. 'We are very late, dear Mildred; we must not tarry now; it is long past three.'

These words of Mrs Carey referred to a disinclination evinced by her companion to arrive at their destination; a scared and hare-like look had once more taken possession of her, as though she beheld some object of fear behind her and about her.

'Did you not hear some sound like a human voice, Marion?'

'Yes, love; our west winds are full of such cries,' returned Mrs Carey coolly. 'When I first came to live in these parts, I used often to open our bedroom window, both before and after the gales, under the impression that some one lay outside in pain. The sea, too, is getting very loud; I think it must be very near high tide.'

'But we were to be at the cavern long before that, were we not?'

'Yes, if we took Milly to see it; but not otherwise. Why should we trouble to descend the cliff, and then toil up again? We have only to guide Mr Stevens home. He cannot mistake the only path that leads hither from the shore, and when he has got up, he cannot fail!'

'There he is!' interrupted Mildred hastily. 'How my heart beats—how my knees tremble! But why is he lying down?'

'That is not him,' returned Mrs Carey confidently; 'it is a larger man even than he.'

'Yes, great Heaven!' cried Mildred; 'it is the very person who has been tracking us all the way, and who pretended to take the path across the fields. Marion, my friend, we are betrayed, and it is I who have led you into the snare. May Heaven and you forgive me; your husband never will, I know.'

'I think he will,' rejoined the lieutenant's wife laughing, 'for that is Robert Andrews, one of his own men. I did not feel so brave as you did about this expedition at starting, so I begged to have a bodyguard, in case we wanted one. It was I who beckoned him, behind your back, to take the field-path, and so get here before us. You are not vexed, are you, Mildred?'

'I am grateful beyond all that words can say,' answered Mildred fervently.

At a sign from Mrs Carey, the man arose, and came forward to meet them.

'Have you seen anything of Mr Stevens?' inquired she. 'Is it possible that he could have missed us after coming up the cliff?'

'Quite impossible, ma'am. If your head can stand looking over here, you will see that yonder is the only path up from the bay; and, except at low tide, one cannot get round either

point. The cavern lies almost underneath us. If he had come up here on the Down, we must have seen him: there is no shelter except that very lane as you came by.'

'But it is now nearly high tide, Robert, and he cannot possibly be in the cavern.'

'Not unless he be a merman, ma'am,' assented Andrews grinning, and touching his hat, as though in apology for joking before his superior. 'My own belief is as the gentleman got sea-sick, and was landed a good way short of this. He may be back at Sandby or even Lucky Bay by this time.'

'Back at Sandby!' cried Mildred with clasped hands; 'then he may even now be at the cottage! Home, home, for Heaven's sake! Why did I ever leave my child!'

With that she turned, and began to retrace her steps, without waiting to hear what comfort the lieutenant's wife was endeavouring to find for her. Moreover, Mrs Carey's face belied her cheering words; it was pale and full of apprehension; and after one more glance at the insatiable sea, which had already devoured the shore, and was sucking with greedy lips the very cliff, she hastened after her friend.

CHAPTER XXVI.—THE EMPTY HOME.

The road which the two ladies had taken from Sandby to the Down above the Mermaid's Cavern, although a short-cut in comparison with that along the cliff-top, was several miles in length, and as Mildred fled back along it now, it seemed as though it would never end. Her eyes were blind to its beauties, or if they were observed, it was only as landmarks to calculate how much of the tedious way still stretched before her. She could not listen to aught that the affection of Mrs Carey, or the honest sympathy of Robert Andrews, prompted each to say. Her mind had sped on with her heart before her to the Cottage and its precious treasure she had left unguarded there, deeming that she herself was standing between it and him who coveted it. She felt like some out-maneuvred chieftain, who, having set forth with his forces to offer battle, learns that the foe has got between him and the fenceless town where the women and children have been left, and by forced marches, hastens back, fearing unutterable things; and as, to his anxious eyes, it is something to see the town yet standing yonder, and not a mere heap of smoking ruins, so, when she first caught sight of her little home, tranquil and fair as ever, with the blue smoke from the kitchen chimney streaming in the wind (the pennant that shews that Commodore Comfort is aboard), and all its windows open to the sun, her white lips moved, although they did not speak to mortal ear, and with one long sigh she dismissed half her sorrow.

'I suppose Milly is in the kitchen, begging for plums,' said Mildred to her friend, like one whose thought needs endorsement: 'cook always spoils the darling. Why do you not speak, Marion?'

'I was looking at that white thing on the roof; at the little window of the attic: there is somebody waving a handkerchief.'

'Yes, so there is. That is Jane's bedroom; she is dressing, and the child is with her, doubtless; she is making a sign of welcome to us—that is all.'

The mother's tremulous voice sorted ill with her confident words, and Mrs Carey did not reply. As they drew nearer, they heard Jane calling:

'Let me out—let me out, ma'am; he has locked me in.'

Without interrogating her further, the two women ran upstairs, and found the attic door locked against them. 'He has taken the key away,' sobbed the poor nursemaid from within, 'and you must bust it in.'

'Come up here, Robert Andrews,' cried the lieutenant's wife. 'Can you break this door open at once, without a crowbar?'

'Ees, ma'am, I rather think I can,' returned the coast-guard'sman, with a twinkle in his eyes. 'Stand back, young ooman, within there, if you please.'

Then raising his foot—that earliest battering-ram in the long roll of warlike instruments—he brought it down with accuracy upon the simple lock: away flew staple and screw heads, as though a petard had been applied to the spot, and behold Little Jane, sitting on her own bed in tears, with twopence-halfpenny tight clasped in one hand, and her pocket-handkerchief in the other!

'I couldn't 'elp it, ma'am,' sobbed she; 'indeed, indeed, I could not. Who would have thought of any harm in a horgin-grinder, with moving himages all round and round, and one of 'em a-playing on the pianna! And poor dear little Milly so pleased—I felt quite obligated to give him what I could spare; and I ran up here for the money, leaving that precious darling dancing with delight, and he pretending to be so kind; and he must have followed me with his shoes off, for I never heard nothin' till he locked the door upon me, and then went down and carried off that beautifullest child! Oh! 'ave you seen anything of her, and can you forgive me, though it ain't my fault, ma'am, it ain't, it ain't indeed!'

'When did the man take my child away, girl?' asked Mrs Hepburn hoarsely.

'Oh, nigh two hours ago, ma'am. You see, cook she went down to Sandby after some shrimps—or leastways after George Brown, for it's no use telling fibs in a time like this—and I and little Milly we was left quite alone; and while we was playing in the garden, who should come over the hill from Lucky Bay but this here man with the music, and little folks dancing in front of it—such a sight as I never before seed! And when he had inveigled me here, and locked me in, I watched him with the little darling on his shoulder, still so proud and pleased, taking the road across the Downs to Westportown; but though I screamed and hollered, and squeeze my head out at the little window, and very nearly never got it back again, not a soul heard me till I see you coming home to where there was no Milly.'

The poor girl rocked herself in such an agony of distress as no reproaches could heighten. Mrs Hepburn did not attempt to reproach her. 'I was thanking God for this, Marion,' whispered she in hollow tones.

'God is never thanked in vain, Mildred,' returned Mrs Carey gravely.—'Now, do not cry, Jane,' added she, addressing the still sobbing girl, 'but answer my questions truthfully and sensibly; thereby you will be doing what you can to repair the mischief which has happened. Did you ever, to your recollection, see this organ-man before?'

'Never, never, never!' answered the girl hysterically.

'You do not think it possible that it could even be anybody you have seen before, in disguise; not,

for instance, the man who called here yesterday and spoke to me upon the lawn—that Mr Stevens?

‘I did not see the gentleman not to remember him, ma’am; but this was a tall big man with a cruel face (though I didn’t think so at the time), and he had gray eyes and grizzled hair.’

‘That is enough,’ said Mrs Carey thoughtfully.

‘Ay, and more than enough,’ groaned the wretched mother. ‘My Milly has been in his power these two hours.’

‘Ay, but he has the organ to carry and the child as well,’ reasoned the lieutenant’s wife. ‘Do you, Robert, take the road to Westportown, and try to come up with this villain. Pursue him, no matter whether he has gone. Give my husband’s card to the chief-constable, and tell him to spare no pains. Here is my purse. Ten precious minutes have been lost already.’

She had scarcely ceased to speak ere the willing giant was upon his way.

Mildred had sunk down on the floor, and, huddled together like some poor wretch who feels the teeth of the frost, there she sat shivering. She was neither weak nor witless; but she saw in what had happened the corroboration of her worst suspicions; and as the partridge cowers while the hawk is in the air, so she shrank beneath this unmistakable work of the relentless hand of her Aunt Grace. Mrs Carey dared not leave her in such a plight (for the nurse-girl was worse than useless), nor, had she done so, could help have been obtained nearer than Lucky Bay. Nobody at Sandby would have done the bidding of the lieutenant’s wife, or even listened to her, so bitter was the feeling in the hamlet against the coast-guard and all connected with it. So the three sat where they were, only that ever and anon Mrs Carey went to the little window, and looked forth in hopes of seeing the figure of Robert Andrews, or some messenger of his, upon the westward road; but she saw nothing but the line of silver birches, thin and bowed, and the wild waste of down, and beyond, the ebbing sea and broadening sand. Once only she whispered to the girl: ‘Did Milly go with this man willingly?’

‘O yes, ma’am, quite; and though of course it was the dancing figures which mainly pleased her, yet the poor dear child seemed to take a fancy to him from the first.’

‘That is very strange,’ mused Mrs Carey.

After many a weary hour, the coast-guardsmen returned. He had been unable to overtake the child-stealer; but the constables were on the alert, and the alarm had been given far and wide. The organ, with the figures in front of it, which had been so fatally attractive to the stolen girl, had been found in a ditch scarce half a mile away.

Mildred listened to what he had to say, without the blank despair upon her face taking any impress. She had expected no better news, and worse could scarce have been brought to her. Later in the evening, as they sat in the little parlour without lights, since Mrs Carey averred that she could knit without them, and the gloom was dear to Mildred in her grief, there entered the truant cook. ‘Having a few hours,’ explained she, ‘she had imprudently taken a sail with Mr Brown in the *Good Intent*, and the wind, though favouring them in going out, had been so contrary when coming back, that they had been delayed thus long; also, when they did land, she had received such news as

had quite “turned her,” and she had been obliged to’—

‘We know all that,’ interrupted Mrs Carey sharply, and making an imperious sign that she should leave the room. Then, after a few minutes, she herself arose, and going into the kitchen, said: ‘Your mistress thought you were about to speak just now of her poor child’s being stolen; but if there is any new misfortune, tell it me. Heaven forbid that you have any bad tidings about Mr Hepburn.’

‘No, ma’am, not about him.’

With a great sigh of relief, Mrs Carey listened to the narration of this domestic, discursive, egotistical, didactic, as it is the manner of her class to be, and more especially when they are conscious of being in disgrace, as though they would hide their error in a very mist of words.

Having heard all, she returned to her childless friend.

‘Am I not right, dear Mildred, in supposing that of this bitter draught you have to drain, the bitterest drop is this, that the man Stevens, against whom you have been warned, and against whom Nature herself has warned you, should be the’—

‘Yes, that my Milly should be in his clutches above all men, that seems worst of all,’ cried the hapless mother. ‘No other could be half so cruel; no other ever frightened my lost darling by his very looks before.’

‘Ay, so I thought, my love. Now, Milly was not frightened at this man, who seemed to have a kind way with him, according to Jane’s story. I thought that this had in it some seed of hope; and now I have just heard’—

‘What? what?’ cried Mildred, clasping her feverish hands.

‘Something that makes it quite impossible that the man who stole your Milly *could* be Stevens.’

A GALLERY OF GREAT MEN.

We have heard certain pious folks declare that they never wish to know their own clergyman; they are unwilling to have the personal acquaintance of the Divine who, from the pulpit, preaches to them of spiritual things, lest his arguments should lose force through his private shortcomings—his Sabbath completeness be impaired by his week-day imperfections. But these persons are certainly exceptions to the general rule. When we are edified, instructed, or even pleased by any man’s work, most of us feel a desire to be acquainted with him. It is not the mere vulgar curiosity that sets people gaping at a Lord Mayor’s coach, which causes us to throng to gaze on Garibaldi. Having heard so much of his chivalry and goodness, it is only natural that we should wish to behold the man himself; to see in what he differs from our own preconceived idea of him, and how far his external features seem to express the qualities of his nature. I suppose there are few educated Englishmen who would not give a great deal to have beheld the face of William Shakespeare. It is, of course, only the Living who can afford us this sort of gratification to the full; but yet, if a picture can be relied upon as genuine; as having been the veritable likeness of the man who was once so great, or

good, or famous—it having been accepted as such in his own lifetime—surely there is a great, although, doubtless, an inferior interest in the contemplation of it. Formerly, this pleasure could be enjoyed by only a very few; mostly rich and noble persons, who chanced to possess such authentic portraits, and their friends. For instance, in the case of Shakespeare, it was known that a certain picture had been taken in his own lifetime, by one of two persons, both his private friends; and it was certainly considered to be a likeness, since it was left by one of them in his will, as a valuable legacy, to Sir William Davenant. After his death, it was bought by Betterton the actor, upon whose decease, one Mr Keck, of the Temple, purchased it for forty guineas, from whom it was inherited by Mr Nicolls of Southgate, whose only daughter married the Duke of Chandos.

All this, and more, is written on a paper at the back of the canvas—now called the Chandos Picture—and the arms of the Duke of Buckingham are affixed. Its history is probably more certain than the genealogy of any living man; and its authenticity was acknowledged at all stages. Sir Godfrey Kneller copied it as a present* for Dryden, who acknowledged the gift in the following lines:

Shakespeare, thy gift I place before my sight;
With awe I ask his blessing ere I write;
With reverence look on his majestic face,
Proud to be less, but of his godlike race.

Even the incredulous Horace Walpole allowed its claims; and it has been engraved no less than four times within the last century and a half. But until recently, this picture was at Stowe, and out of general reach. Such was more or less the case with the likenesses of all our celebrated men, until the National Portrait-gallery was established, where any of us may now see this very Chandos Picture—the copy of which drew the above apostrophe from Dryden—as well as nearly two hundred other portraits of more or less famous Englishmen—kings, statesmen, poets, warriors, divines, and painters—but all to be relied upon as veritable pictures of the persons they profess to represent.

To the mere ignoramus, who knows nothing of the things which have made Britain a country to be proud of, this Gallery is of course but a collection of meaningless faces, and he might just as well depute his umbrella to look at them, and leave himself in the hall below; yet even such a man would be struck with what is called 'the speaking likenesses' of most of these pictures. They are not all, by any means, first-rate specimens of art, but the majority give one, very strongly, that notion of being 'like,' which we now and then receive from a portrait, although we have never set eyes on the features which it represents. Nor is this to be wondered at; for most men of mark exhibit some evidence of their ability in their faces, and the faces that are thus distinguished—or, in other words, are 'characteristic'—are, it is well known, most easily and faithfully conveyed to canvas. The picture of Woodfall, for example, the first parliamentary reporter, which fronts you as you ascend the stairs, has a certain habitual air of listening, which no allegorical painter, wishing to embody that action, no mythological delineator of a supposed Echo, could ever compass. Again, close beside General

Picton's dauntless face, severe almost to cruelty, hangs the complacent unctuous countenance of William Huntingdon, S.S., the meaning of which initials he thus himself explains: 'As I cannot get at D.D. for want of cash, neither can I get at M.A. for want of learning, therefore I am compelled to fly for refuge to S.S., by which I mean Sinner Saved.' This was the famous river-porter, whose theological works extend over twenty volumes, and whose epitaph, composed by himself, runs as follows:

Here lies the Coal-heaver,
Beloved of God, but abhorred of men.

I do not doubt but that if one was merely told that the portraits of these two men were somewhere in this great collection, without name or number to distinguish them, one could pick them out for one's self. Cardinal York, too, the last descendant of the unhappy House of Stuart—he that had the medal struck in his own honour, *Henricus Nonus Magn. Brit. Rex. Non desideris hominum sed voluntate Dei*—has just the features, half-priestly, half-aristocratic, wholly self-satisfied, which might be expected in such a character. Paley and Horne Tooke, divines who hang almost side by side, are in expression separate as the poles, as different from each other in appearance as they were in character, and each, it strikes one, looking the very man he was. Richard III. is artful and suspicious in feature as in mind. Wilberforce is intelligent, benevolent, and winning. Byron's handsome face is instinct with self-will. Smeaton is keen as a sun-ray, and looks ready to defend his seeming-audacious plans against all objectors. Dibdin is joyous and spirited as one of his own songs. Garrick with an intensity of expression that is scarcely seen in any but an actor. Macintosh, subtle, yet strong—one of the most characteristic faces in the whole Gallery.

Upon the other hand, in not a few cases, the person of whom you have made a picture in your own brain, instead of looking as he ought to look, disappoints all expectation. Sir Walter Raleigh has the appearance of a hairdresser's assistant objecting to the introduction of some novelty of the day—such as a rotatory machine. Harvey looks as though his blood, at all events, had never properly circulated; while his neighbour, Archbishop Laud—for the arrangement of the pictures is quite arbitrary—has evidently taken too much liquor. Nay, even the portrait of Mary Queen of Scots—one, by the by, 'of remarkable authenticity'—fails altogether to give one the idea of a beauty. She is represented covered with jewels—as though almost to imply that her face was not her fortune—and at the age of eighteen; but when compared with real beauties, such as Nell Gwynne and La belle Hamilton in the adjoining room, she is almost plain. And yet she has the advantage of being placed side by side with Sir Nicholas Bacon, who is quite as much like an orang-outang as a man. Wesley, too, looks less like the impassioned preacher that he was than a fashionable curate. Dear Captain Cook—whom 'every school-boy knows,' and so justly admires—has a mean bad face. Arkwright is heavy and sodden, although his eyes somewhat redeem him. Wordsworth, true poet and philosopher though he was, has a dull lack-lustre look, but it should be added, that the portrait was taken when he was far advanced in years. The expression

* This copy is now in the collection of Earl Fitzwilliam.

of the Merry Monarch is not only vicious, but truculent; and Dr Parr is at least five parts Sot to one part Scholar. Nay, one of the most beautiful faces in the collection, with a tender melancholy about it, and soft and languishing eyes, is that of Jeffreys, the judge of 'the Bloody Assize.' It is the most unexpected countenance one can imagine, and though taken after he was Lord Chancellor, so young! He was but just forty, however, when he died.

The youth of many of the persons represented—in cases where the portraits have been taken within a year or two of their decease—strikes one as very remarkable; for when people are 'historical,' one is apt to imagine them as old. Yet Richard III., whom most of us identify with the wicked old uncle of the Babes in the Wood, did not reach his thirty-sixth birthday. General Wolfe,* taken within twelve months of his glorious death, presents a young man of thirty, with a very turn-up nose—like Goldsmith's—and nothing particular in his face, save a certain eagerness. This eager look, but intensified to actual combativeness, is also the characteristic of John Keats. In the portrait by Severn, even more than in that by Hilton (for there are two pictures of the author of *Hyperion*), the extreme youth of the man who could think such deep as well as beautiful thoughts is strikingly apparent. Of the persons of real note, Keats is the youngest who has won his way to the *National* Portrait-gallery; but there is a picture of Southey at twenty-four, and also of Coleridge at the same age—the latter a sparkling countenance, sadly different from the doughy 'lecturing' face it grew to thirty years afterwards. His own touching lines of *Youth and Age* are therein sadly illustrated.

It has been impossible to mention one quarter of the very interesting pictures which are to be seen in this collection; whereas those that are not much worth looking at—whose claims to be there, we mean, seem to have been too easily allowed—might be disposed of in twenty words. A few politicians have found their way into this Valhalla—for it may be fitly called so, since most of the inmates have died, if not in battle, yet 'with their harness on'—upon pretence of having been statesmen, such as Sir Leoline Jenkins; and perhaps an author or two, without sufficient reputation to be called 'national,' such as Arthur Murphy, whom most of the visitors to the Gallery will probably identify with the editor of the *Weather Almanac*. But as one must not look gift-horses in the mouth, so, we suppose, in gift-pictures one must not be too exacting as to reputations, and, on the whole, the exhibition is well selected and admirable. It is in contemplation to remove it to much larger apartments at South Kensington, where it will doubtless receive great accessions by loan as well as by gift and purchase. But even now, in its present confined space,† it affords a gratuitous treat such as all educated Englishmen should be thankful for. Had it nothing to shew them but the Chandos Shakespeares, they might well flock to see it: not one of your mere handsome faces, such as Monmouth's, though very manly and well-looking, too, but with a brow

heavy with thought, as becomes the wisest of all human kind. Perhaps, however, the most noticeable thing to many will be that the author of *Hamlet* and *King Lear* wears earrings.

NO. 57 CHANDOS STREET, S.W.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

MR KERRISON had gone away on his confidential mission, and Catherine had come over to see me in the course of the day. I thought she looked sad and ill, but her brother's absence for even a short period was calculated to produce that effect. The dinner-party had been a dull and ponderous festivity; but the Poynder ladies had been kind and attentive to Miss Kerrison, and had admired her playing and singing very much. Captain Warrender had not made any remark upon her 'Quaker dress,' and Meyrick Kerrison had made himself particularly agreeable. 'Do you know,' said Catherine, smiling, but faintly, and only for a moment, 'I have an idea that Miss Poynder would have no objection to Meyrick in a more intimate relation than "papa's confidential clerk," and that, if he chose, the firm might be Poynder, Mure, and Kerrison.'

'And will he choose, do you think?' I asked.

'No, I fear not. Miss Poynder is not pretty, and Meyrick cannot endure plain women. He has a contempt for women, on the whole, I think, though he is so good a brother to me. I have heard him say no woman has any business with more than beauty, and a woman who has less ought to be locked up, for the relief of society. Of course, this is only jesting, but there is a grain of his real feeling in it. I watched her when he and Mr Poynder persisted in talking together over at the fireplace, and Geoffrey was turning the leaves of her music-book, and I fancied she looked disappointed. No, no, Mrs Allingham; it is not all my absurd love for Meyrick, and belief in my brother's irresistible attractions; I am sure she likes him much.'

'And when does Mr Kerrison return, Catherine?'

'He said he should be home on Thursday; and I do wish the time were over, for he looked ill and worried when he was going away. I told him I wished he had some less onerous post than that of confidential clerk, for I thought it was wearing him out.'

'You are encouraging, as consoler to a busy man, Catherine. What did he say?'

'Nothing at first; then he kissed me, and said: "Never mind, Kate; it will soon be all right. I shan't be anybody's clerk long, but my own master instead, and then you and I will cut Chandos Street, and see life."

'Does he not see how it is with you and Captain Geoffrey Warrender, that he talks of "you and I?" I asked.

'No, I don't think he does; they say brothers never do; and, you know, Mrs Allingham, I have not any right to tell him yet—her innocent, modest, trustful faith in the man she loved shone out of her serene gray eyes—'and, besides, it must always be Meyrick and I. Geoffrey would not part us, if he could, but even he could never do that.'

The clearest picture in my memory of the orphan girl is as she stood while she spoke these words, her graceful head slightly thrown back, her

* It is astonishing how this likeness of Wolfe is reproduced by the sculptor of his monument, only a stone-throw distant, in Westminster Abbey.

† The Gallery has been for three or four years in its present quarters, at 26 Great George Street, Westminster.

earnest face raised, and irradiated by feeling, her hands loosely clasped before her, their delicate whiteness and fine shape enhanced in effect by the lustrous sheen of the rich blue silk dress she wore, and the rings which shone on her fingers. A few minutes after she had spoken these words, she left me, promising to return early on the morrow.

'If you please, ma'am,' said Martha, at half-past ten on the following morning, 'I'm ready to go out now; and the postman, he's been, and there ain't no one else to come worritin', leastways not till after twelve; and if you'll give me your messages, I can go to the doctor's, and get my gorbils, which I don't believe they're doin' me any good; but anyhow, gorbils don't kill you so quick as black draughts—and be back afore twelve. You won't have to open the door, ma'am, for no one, except it's Miss Kerrison; and I'm a-goin' to call for Roger Bacon, which he yelps dreadful, through bein' constant in the 'ouse those three days, and I can see if she's a-comin' over.'

I assented to Martha's propositions generally, and she departed on an expedition to the nearest homœopathic doctor: a sacred mission, from which she never swerved, though she proclaimed her disbelief in the efficacy of 'gorbils' every Tuesday, with regularity as unvarying.

In a few minutes Miss Kerrison came across the street; and as I opened the door and admitted her, I saw that she was deadly pale, and breathing quickly.

'What is the matter? What has agitated you, Catherine?' I said as I led her into my little dining-room, and lifted the bonnet, whose strings she had not tied, off her head. Her reply was a question: 'Are you alone?'

'Of course I am alone,' I said. 'Martha has just been with you, and has gone on to Chelsea, and you know there is no one else in the house.'

'I forgot, I forgot,' she said vacantly; and then, apparently recovering herself by a strong effort, she said: 'Come upstairs; I've much to tell you—that is, if I may.'

The fair sweet face looked wan and desolate. I longed to tell her she might regard me as a mother—she, who had never known a mother's love—I, who had never been called to a mother's duty. But I knew that anything like expansion of sentiment would only increase her agitation and cloud my judgment, for the exercise of which I concluded I should soon find full need.

I seated Catherine on my sofa, drew a chair close to her side, and again requested her to tell me what had occurred to agitate and distress her thus. She held a newspaper of the previous evening in her hand, and in a faint voice said, as she pointed to a paragraph headed 'Sudden Death this Day: 'Have you noticed this?' I took the paper from her hand, and read, in the customary set phrase of regret and eulogium with which the death of any man known to be of commercial respectability, and supposed to be rich, is set forth, for the reproof and instruction of the children of Mammon, that Mr Mure, of the banking firm of Poynder and Mure, Lombard Street, City, had dropped dead at his private residence at one o'clock on Monday. 'This is a dreadfully sudden death indeed,' I said; 'but did you know him personally, dear Catherine, that it has thus affected you? Did you only learn the sad event just now, or'—She interrupted me with an impatient gesture, and a cry of 'Meyrick, Meyrick.'

'Yes, yes,' I said, 'he will feel it, no doubt; but, my child, there is terror in your face, and it is growing wilder and wilder every moment. Try to still your nerves, and tell me what it is you fear.' Now I knew the time for protestations had come, and I assured her most fervently and solemnly that all I could do, by the utmost exertion of mind and body, to aid her, whatever might be the strait she was in, I would do, and that she might trust me to any extent.

'I am so utterly alone,' she said—'so utterly alone;' and then, rousing herself, 'but I would trust you by choice, Mrs Allingham, even though necessity did not constrain me.' She raised herself upright, fixed her eyes on mine, and with enforced composure spoke.

'We always take this evening paper, but I did not look at it last night; and this morning, when I came down to breakfast, it lay upon the table. There was a letter'—She grew paler and paler as she spoke, and at this word she lightly touched her bosom, and I knew who had written that letter, and where the precious paper lay. 'I did not look at the newspaper at all,' she went on; 'and I heard a cab stop at the door, and not remembering the early hour—I—I thought it might be Geoffrey.' She corrected herself, and a spasm crossed her face. 'I thought it might be Captain Warrender; but it was a gentleman from the bank, who brought me a note from Mr Poynder. This is it.' She put a blue, business-like sheet of paper in my hand. Mr Poynder wrote like a man who had a mind to be distinctly read, with as much unemotional clearness as print:

LOMBARD STREET, CITY,
November 24, 1862.

DEAR MISS KERRISON—The sudden death of my partner, Mr Mure, which took place yesterday at one o'clock, has caused much confusion here. Immediate reference to his papers is necessary, and they are in your brother's keeping. Will you oblige me by giving to the gentleman who will hand you this the keys of the safe and desk appropriated to Mr Kerrison's use, and which I am aware are in your charge? The bearer, Mr John Evans, will hand you an acknowledgment for them.—I am, dear Miss Kerrison, yours sincerely,

JAMES GEORGE POYNDER.

I read this letter, and an instant conviction of deep and deadly danger flashed upon me.

'Did you give up the keys, Catherine?'

'I did,' she said; and springing off her seat, she caught me by the hands, and ejaculated: 'O my God, what have I done? I see you share my terror. I see I have ruined him! O Mrs Allingham, help me! Is there no way, no hope? It came to my mind in one instant—I can't tell how—perhaps because I was so happy, I grew suddenly wise, and I saw that you had some such thought.' Her agitation was dreadful to see—impossible to narrate.

'Hush, Catherine; you must calm yourself; you must be quiet, for his sake. There is yet a little time, yet a chance: it is a matter of minutes; and it cannot be done if we are not perfectly quiet, and do not thoroughly understand each other. Drink this, and be silent for a moment.' I put water to her lips, and she sat down. I thought for a moment, and then said: 'Catherine, we have no time for pain now; your brother is in danger. Why do you know this? Answer what I ask, no more.'

'Because—I cannot tell why; but after I had given up the keys, I remembered that Meyrick had been startled and confused when Mr Poynder told him the other evening that he considered Mr Mure in a precarious state, and that he had had a decided fit, though he persisted in representing it only as a faint. I remembered that he had said his clerkship would soon come to an end—and I remembered—and oh, I cannot tell you how the remembrance terrified me—your question: "What did your lace shawl cost, Catherine?" I think I had a revelation in that moment. O Meyrick, O my darling brother! And I have sent them the keys, and he is at their mercy!' There was no violence in her voice and gesture now, she was a pale image of still despair.

'Catherine,' I said, 'I cannot estimate the danger he is in, but it resolves itself into this: if our fear be true—and I don't pretend to think it *can* be false—exposure must be either come, or coming. There are two cases possible: the one, that Mr Poynder's letter is written in good faith, and that the detection will only take place when a search is made among your brother's papers; the other, that suspicion has arisen from some quarter, undiscoverable by us, yesterday, and that Mr Poynder's note is a clever *ruse*—doubtless suggested by the police—to which Mr Mure's death has afforded plausibility. I don't *know* positively that papers could not be so immediately necessary, but I *think* they could not. In either case, there is very little time, and our course of action is the same. If the letter be a *ruse*, it indicates that they are determined to proceed to work quietly and covertly, or they would have arrested him by this time.' I saw the agony I was inflicting, but I had no choice and no time. 'If the letter be a *ruse*, they mean to have the materials for his conviction in their hand, and to allow him to come quietly back to town. We shall soon know, because, in that case, they will watch you. How long is it since you sent the keys?'

'About half an hour now.'

'Did you betray any anxiety, doubt, or hurry?'

'No; the fear did not occur to me till afterwards. I know so little of business—and—and—I was thinking of other things.' Again a spasm crossed the sweet face, ah, how much older since the day before!

'Then they will not dream of your using the telegraph; and they will not begin their watch till post-hour. Now, Catherine, listen to me, with all your heart and all your ears. Write your brother's address in this tablet.' She did so, and then sat listening, while every few moments a quick shudder passed over her frame. 'We have but a few minutes now, for I must have returned from the telegraph station before Martha comes in. You must go home, and tell the servants of Mr Mure's sudden death, and of the shock it has given you. You must tell them you feel sure Mr Kerrison will return at once; so sure, that you do not think it worth while to write to him by to-night's mail; and give orders for the preparation of his room. Do not draw your blinds down; shew yourself frequently at your window; and put on your black silk dress. I will communicate with you again before post-hour; after that time, our true difficulties will begin.'

'Am I to do nothing? Am I not to stay with you, or to go to him?' she asked piteously.

'No, my child; you must do the harder task—you must watch and wait. Go now, at once, and speak to the servants; and as I return, let me see you in your black dress in the window.' With a silent clasp of the hand, she left me, and I prepared at once to go out. No. 58 being a corner-house, I avoided passing any of our neighbours, and turning down Stove Street, made my way to the nearest telegraph station. The address which Catherine had given me was to a large city in Scotland, and the message I sent was as follows:

'The junior partner died yesterday. His papers are in the hands of the senior, with all those in the safe and desk. You need not come up at present. Proceed to France on the business you know of. Write by post to me.'

'How soon can you transmit this?' I asked the telegraph-clerk, who read the message off with a glibness strange to my unaccustomed ears.

'Directly,' was his satisfactory reply; 'the lines are clear just now.'

Then I walked quickly home, and let myself in; and when Martha returned, weary and ill-tempered, I was in my accustomed place.

'I never see such a place, never,' said Martha, as she deposited her purchases on the table, 'full of great healthy girls, and women as ought to be ashamed of 'emselves, to be worritin' a doctor with their fancies. The more healthier people is, the more gorbils they'll swallow; keepin' them as wants to get home to their work a-waitin' all day. Is your change right, ma'am? I'm sure I hope it be; but what with Roger Bacon a-hustlin' and a-worritin', in and out of the chairs, and under the counters, and a-smellin' of the fish, and a-bitin' of the butter-boy, I'm fairly addled. He shan't come out no more, along o' me, and so I tell him. He'll be wantin' to go along o' Betsy to Mitcham next, I suppose.'

'Who is Betsy, and why should Roger want to go with her?' I asked mildly.

'It's Betsy, housemaid at 57, ma'am. When I took Roger 'ome just now, which he ought to be tired, for he have run three times the length of the way, perpetually a-dodgin' of himself, Betsy told me as she had had a letter from her mother, and her little sister had scalt herself awful; and Miss Kerrison give her leave to go home at once, and stay as long as she is wanted to nurse her sister; which,' said Martha, with a swift recurrence to the misdemeanours of the dog who tyrannised over her, and whom she accordingly doted on, 'she won't do much nursin' of her, if she takes Roger, I can tell her.'

This intelligence pleased me. The fewer eyes upon Catherine for the next two critical and perilous days, the better. Betsy came out with her modest box, called a cab, and was driven away, amidst derisive barks from Roger. Catherine sat in the window, her figure visible behind the panes, in her black silk dress, some pretence of employment in her hand. The time passed, and there was no alarm, no message. My early dinner being over, a meal for which I had little appetite, and the hour at which I usually went out having arrived, I went across the street to No. 57. The short day was then on the decline. Hannah, the cook, opened the door, and as she did so, a man, walking slowly by, slackened his pace; I knew it, though I was not looking at him, and I said: 'Miss Kerrison is at home, I know, Hannah, and Martha tells me you expect your master.'

'Yes, ma'am; one of the bank gentlemen is dead, and master is coming home.'

The woman spoke in an assured tone, which was quite accidental, but very fortunate. The man passed on whistling; and I went up stairs to the drawing-room, and caught Catherine silently in my arms. We said little, and that little was not of an explanatory nature. It would be impossible for me to account for our entire conviction of the justice of our fears, the truth of our convictions; a metaphysician might perhaps do so, but I could not, and Catherine as little as I.

The gas was lighted in the street, and Hannah had been in the tea-tray. We were both silent, for I had told her the words of the telegram I had sent, and she had said: 'Nothing can be done or known until after post-hour to-morrow.'

'Nothing,' I had replied, when I suddenly remembered the letter she had mentioned in the morning.

'Dearest Catherine,' I said to her, 'we are probably very near our parting. All is uncertainty and dread, which to-morrow must decide and dissipate, or fatally confirm. We are absolutely in the dark—let that darkness be as little deep as may be. You had a letter this morning—a letter which made you happy for a brief moment—a letter, dear, which may make you happy yet.'

'Never, Mrs Allingham,' said Catherine firmly, and her face and form assumed an utterly unworldly pride. 'That letter was from Geoffrey Warrender, and its purport was to ask me to be his wife.' I knew by her gesture that the letter still lay in its pure and sacred resting-place. 'If Geoffrey Warrender would ally his honoured name with the future, the present infamy of mine, I would not suffer him to do so; and were that consideration miraculously set aside and dissolved, there is another. I said to you, Mrs Allingham, a few days since, only a few days, though that seems hard to believe, that it must always be Meyrick and I; and so it must. You love me, Mrs Allingham; and you condemn him. You must condemn him: he is a wicked man; but no matter. Let us never speak of Geoffrey Warrender again, after to-night. It must always, until the end, be Meyrick and I—Meyrick and I.' She repeated the words softly to herself, once or twice, as her fingers moved restlessly upon the table; then rose, with a heavy sigh, and paced the room from end to end.

'Catherine,' said I, 'have you written to Captain Warrender? I know he has not been here.'

'No,' she replied; 'I have not written, and he has not been here. His letter says he will wait my permission, knowing that Meyrick is absent. But I will write—I will write,' she said wearily. 'Time enough for that; he will know my fate and his own soon enough.'

As we had been sitting together, I had turned in my mind every possible contingency which could arise with the morrow. The most probable, and perhaps not the least desirable, seemed to me to be Meyrick Kerrison's arrest. Could it be worse for her than his escape? But, supposing the telegram to have been in time, what then? They would watch her, and detect his movements by hers. If they could be thrown off the scent for ever so short a time. Ah, yes; but how? I cannot say I formed anything approaching to a definite plan, but a vague project presented itself to my mind, contingent on the communication which I expected in the morning being of a certain

nature. I prepared Catherine for the possibility of our not being able to meet again personally, and assigned as a reason that I felt assured a man was then watching the house. As I spoke, I heard the quick step of a postman, and looking cautiously out into the lighted street, I saw the same man of whom I had already spoken strolling with apparent carelessness towards No. 57 from the opposite side. He came up to the footway just as the postman passed by the area railings. There were no letters for No. 57, and the man lounged away.

'Catherine,' I said, 'have you ever employed Miss Chudleigh as a milliner; or has she only made the dress you are wearing?'

She looked surprised for a moment at my apparently frivolous question; but perceiving from my face that it had significance, quietly replied: 'No, never. She sent me a card with the dress relative to straw-bonnets, mantles, &c., but I have not wanted anything of the kind.'

'Well, then, send Hannah early in the morning with a straw-bonnet, in a handbox, in her hand; tell her to leave it at Miss Chudleigh's, and that you will call or send directions about it in the course of the day. Be sure to do this. Do not attempt to hold any communication with me by message or letter; but half an hour after you shall have seen the postman knock at my door in the morning, let Roger Bacon out into the street. Watch until you see him let into my house, and then watch until he returns. When he does, let Hannah admit him—do not allow her to see that you are anxious—and look inside his collar for a letter from me. And now, Catherine, good-night. I can say nothing to guide, comfort, or support you; I can only entreat you to strive to wait with what patience you may for the morrow: after all, perhaps it may bring us light. Stay, though: you have a black shawl; bring it to me; keep my heavy black cloak; you may need it. Let me put it on you; now, my bonnet: walk to the door, that I may see whether you could pass for me. Yes, you might. You have learned to stoop, my child, since you have carried this load of sorrow, though it be only a twelve hours' burden. The dress will do, and the cloak will do; but I must take care that that man sees my widow's bonnet.'

I left her, standing at the door of the drawing-room, her head bowed, and her face hidden in her hands.

When I found myself alone in my room, I felt satisfied with the outline of the plan I had sketched, and well content to know, that though the man, who was standing beside the railings of No. 56 as I entered my house, might perhaps not have seen my face very distinctly, he had had a perfect view of my bonnet.

Slowly, slowly wore away the hours of that long night, and dreadful seemed the dawn which came at last. The usual street-sounds began: carts rumbled, cocks crowed, and the milkman went his chalky way. I had risen and dressed myself before the postman's knock came and made me tremble, and turn cold and sick. I glanced at Catherine's window; the blind stirred, and I knew that she was watching. Presently, in came Martha with a letter. I laid it down while we exchanged our morning greeting; but when she had left the room, I tore it eagerly open. Inside the envelope, which bore my name, were these words: 'Read, and forward the enclosed.'

The enclosed was a letter directed to 'C. K.' I opened it, and read as follows:

MY DEAREST CATHERINE—You made a blunder in giving Mr Evans—whose address, no doubt, is Scotland Yard—my keys; but it was a blunder of no real consequence. Detection was inevitable, and their clever *ruse* has rather failed than otherwise. Had they sent down and arrested me at once, they would have secured at least some valuable information; as it is, they get nothing, absolutely nothing, for our furniture and your gewgaws are little worth in so large a calculation, and Poynder will not touch them. I have not robbed the man for six years, while you were a pretty little girl at school, part of the time, without learning enough about him to know that. For I have robbed him, Catherine, and poor old Mure, particularly Mure. I have speculated largely with their money. Had my speculations succeeded, I should only have been a temporary borrower without acknowledgment. They have failed, and I am a detected thief. I regard this position from one point of view; the world would regard it from another; but as it would include you in its oblique criticism, I am bound to sacrifice my own opinion. I have loved you, after my own fashion, always, and you have loved me. No other woman ever did, though one almost persuaded me so for a while. Yes, I have loved you, Kate, and it is better to be the sister of a suicide than of a convicted felon. Don't suppose I have deliberately abandoned a chance of escape. I have none, not the faintest. They prefer taking me in London, and are hoping I will quietly return; but the hotel I am in is watched, and so is the railway station. I would not desert you, Catherine, believe me, if anything less than penal servitude for a long term of years—and thus a total separation from you under circumstances which would exclude you from the pity which the world will not refuse you when I am dead—awaited me. I know the world, my Catherine: the ill odour of the convict would cling to you for ever, that of the corpse will pass away. Farewell. You and I have sometimes speculated upon the hereafter—that is, you have preached, and I have humoured your innocent credulity. I am about to test the truth, to try out the question between your theory and mine. I hope there is another world, in which things are differently arranged, in which bankers have not all the money, and clerks all the brains and all the ambition.

I am glad you have a friend in Mrs Allingham: she is true to you; but she cannot outwit a banker defrauded of his gold, and detective police stimulated by large rewards. One of them went down in the train with me, and smoked my cigars. I nevertheless thank her, for your sake; she is brave to declare herself the friend of another woman, on whom the world frowns. Again, good-bye, my only sister. I should blow my brains out with a steadier hand if I could do it beside your grave. But this is the next best thing for you, and the only thing for me.

MEYRICK KERRISON.

I do not know how long I had been sitting with this awful letter in my hand, when Martha came in abruptly, exclaiming: 'Oh, if you please, ma'am, Roger'—She stopped, and cried out, appalled at the horror in my face. At the same instant there came a loud vehement knocking at the hall-door, and a man's voice called entreatingly on my name. I signed to Martha to open the door, but I could

not move. In a moment the room was filled with noise, the sound of voices, and the uproarious barking of a dog. Before I fainted, I distinguished Captain Warrender's face, and heard an elderly gentleman, who was speaking to me, but of whose words I had not the slightest comprehension, addressed as Mr Poynder.

Catherine Kerrison never read her brother's letter. I had seen the window-blind move, and it was her hand which had moved it; immediately afterwards, the newspaper had been brought to the door. I suppose, in her restless agitation, any movement had been a relief—at all events, she had taken in the paper; and when Hannah carried the breakfast things into the parlour, she found her young mistress crouching in a corner of the room, the paper containing an account of her brother's suicide on the floor before her, her eyes gazing wildly straight out into the air, and her hands fastened in the long locks of her brown hair. The screams of the terrified servant brought a crowd round the house, through which Mr Poynder and Captain Warrender forcibly pushed their way. They had carried her to her bed before they came for me. When I was able to go to her, I found her lying quite still. The large gray eyes were wide open, and dreadfully bright, and all the beauty had vanished from the vacant face. Thus she lay for many days, speechless; but at length one morning, while I watched her, her lips moved, and, after an effort, she said softly: 'Meyrick and I.' They were the only words she spoke for very long. Catherine had said truly: Captain Warrender had learned his fate and hers on the morrow. She had written to him after I left her that night. We found the simple little letter under the cover of her Bible on a table by her bedside. It contained only these words: 'No, Geoffrey, I can never be your wife; not because I do not love you, but because I do so dearly and so faithfully that I could not ally you, even in thought, to the disgrace which has fallen upon me. All the world will know it soon, but you must know it soonest, that you may not soil your good name by contact with ours. I send you back your letter. No one will ever know that a felon's sister was the beloved and chosen one, even for a day, of Geoffrey Warrender.'

CATHERINE.

Little change has taken place in Catherine Kerrison's mental condition since that day. Her bodily health is excellent, and she is the gentlest of maniacs. She very rarely speaks, and for the most part roams about, smiling and unemployed, the favourite of the patients and the nurses, and the principal of the admirably-conducted private asylum in which she was placed, as soon as the best medical authorities had pronounced her case to be hopeless. Sometimes she is seized with a fit of industry, and then she is supplied with a profusion of gold tinsel and narrow ribbon, and she manufactures wonderful rosettes of these materials, and distributes them to all her friends, beginning with the doctor, informing each, with an air of profound mystery, that she thus bestows upon him the Victoria Cross. When the distribution is concluded, she lays aside two of the rosettes, and says with a smile: 'For Meyrick and me.'

I still live in quiet Chandos Street, S.W., for I am not rich enough to consult my feelings only. Martha informs me that the new people at No. 57,

a retired upholsterer and his wife, are 'awful particular about their joints.' 'Lor, ma'am,' says Martha, 'the butcher do say he never met the like of Mrs Davis: she'll tell the weight of a leg or a shoulder within 'alf a hounce; and as for weighing of the fat in, he dursn't do it.' And I suspect Martha is deeply in the confidence of the butcher, who is a bachelor, and has the ruddy complexion, soft skin, fine hair, and tendency to corpulence frequently remarkable among gentlemen who have passed their time in the society of raw meat. Roger Bacon greatly affects the abode of the butcher, 'which,' observes Martha, 'he gives 'im a deal too much liver;' to which undue liberality she attributes Roger's increased tendency to molest Silken Thomas. My household is quiet, and my life is rather sad—more sad than usual when I have 'company,' which epithet Martha applies to a 'one-armed gentleman' who comes to see me pretty often, and with whom I occasionally drive out into the pleasant country, and visit the living dead.

GIVING ONE'S ADDRESS.

No one seems to know where or when the custom arose of giving distinctive names to streets. Of the usefulness of such a system, there cannot be a doubt, as any one will agree who is familiar with the smaller streets in some of the towns in the central parts of England; whether they really possess names or not, the names are very sparingly written up. Woe betide the stranger whose duty it is to find out a resident in such a street; his work is often a veritable 'pursuit of knowledge under difficulties'—especially when, as is still more frequently the case, there are no numbers to the houses.

Most of our streets and public ways in the metropolis have two names, one special, and the other general. The exceptions are such as Aldgate, Strand, Poultry, Cheapside, Piccadilly, Quadrant, Cornhill, Whitehall, Haymarket, Smithfield, &c. The general name of the others, partaking somewhat of the character of surnames or family names, are Street, Road, Row, Crescent, Circus, Avenue, Terrace, Place, Square, Gardens, Lane, Park, Grove, Pavement, Walk, Court, Alley, Yard, Steps, Rents, Mews, &c. They all had a meaning once, and were really useful; for they served to distinguish one kind of row of houses from another. But what a medley we have at the present day! The name of Gardens was given appropriately to clusters of small houses built on the garden of some dilapidated and perhaps demolished old mansion; but it is now used as the name for many a row of stylish-looking houses in Kensington and Tyburnia. In the former case, the name had a meaning, as denoting what the plot of ground had once been; but in the modern instances, there is no special association with gardens in any sense. Then the name Park is greatly in favour with modern street-builders; not because there is the least symptom of a park to be seen, but because it sounds genteel. There can hardly be said to be any distinction now in the new blocks of houses designated Streets, Roads, Rows, and Places, so far as those four appellations are concerned. Once a Row, like a Terrace, had houses only on one side; and a Place was quadrangular, like a Square, with or without a green plot in the middle. It was a pretty name when Avenue or Grove was applied to a roadway

well planted with trees; but we all are acquainted with Avenues and Groves which have been innocent of such adornments ever since they were formed. When the country predominated over the town, Road and Lane constituted two very distinct kinds of highway, the one broad, and the other narrow; but the distinction is now nearly lost in our busy towns. In Paris, the surnames (as we have called them) of streets are *Rue, Route, Place, Boulevard, Barrière, Chemin, Sentier, Allée, Chaussée*, and one or two others: all of these were characteristic of some peculiarities in the streets when they were formed; but among the disruptions and reconstructions which the French capital is undergoing, these designations are becoming more and more concentrated into the one form *Rue*. At Naples, the plan is said to be adopted of giving the name of *Strada* to a principal street, *Vico* to a cross-street, *Vicoletta* to a smaller street, *Strettolo* to a lane, *Calata* to a hilly or steep street, *Salita* to a suburban street, *Gradoni* to a street so steep as to require steps, and *Rampi* to a street of many branches. In Milan, the principal streets are *Corsi*, while those in the suburbs are *Borght*.

The individual or special names of streets, however, are those with which the most curious facts are associated. In this free England of ours, every builder seems to claim the right of giving what name he pleases to a street which owes its birth to him; and very unmeaning names they often are. The thing is not without commercial value, either; for some years ago, when a builder named a new row of houses Benjamin Road, he could scarcely let any of them; whereas, when he changed the name to Clifton Road, he found tenants for them at once. One man covered with houses a plot of ground known as the Roman Road Estate; and so he resolved to be classical, by the adoption of *Trajan, Adrian, and Antonine Roads*. Those who, in past years, gave the name of *Blow Bladder Street, Naked Boy Alley*, and others of a whimsical kind, to certain localities in the metropolis, had doubtless some special incidents to rely upon, not now clearly traceable. And the same observation must apply to the names of certain streets in French towns—*Rue Corps Nu Sans Tête, Rue Fiel de Bonif, Rue Puits d'Amour, Rue Tant Perde Tant Paye, and Rue Ecoute si Pluie*. The usual origin of names, however, has something more prosaic about it—the Christian names of the builder's children; his own and their surname; the names of sovereign and royal personages—all are brought into use with wearisome pertinacity. If the *Carltons, the Cliftons, and the Belgraves* have brought genteel dwellers into a new district, other builders imitate those names; and if *Myrtle Grove* and *Acacia Terrace* sound villa-like, they in like manner are regarded as good speculative names.

Strangers are much embarrassed by the multiplicity of repetitions in the names of streets; and letter-carriers have many an additional weary mile to walk, owing to erroneous addresses or directions arising on this account. Paris has sinned a little in this way, seeing that she has eighteen *Eglises*, sixteen *Maries*, and as many *Notre Dames* among the names of her streets. But London has sinned more. In 1856 the Post-office authorities informed the Metropolitan Board of Works that seventeen names sufficed for no less than five hundred and seventy-one streets in London, including sixty-six Church Streets, sixty-two George Streets, and a liberal supply of Charles, John, and

King Streets. Nothing was more common than for one Church Street, &c. to be confounded with another in the directions on letters. Another difficulty was, that the houses on one side of one street, instead of being numbered in one consecutive series, were thrown into groups having different names—perhaps four in Albion Terrace, then six in Brunswick Terrace, then ten in Minerva Place, and then two in Victoria Villas. There was one instance in which a road of two hundred and four houses was cut up into nineteen Terraces, Villas, Places, Buildings, and Rows, varying from two to thirty houses in each; and as inscriptions on corners and gate-posts were rather scanty, the result was often seriously wasteful of time. But the builders did not care: Mr Brown thought it more independent to have Belle Vue Terrace as a name for his six houses, than to make them a mere supplement or tag to the six which Mr Smith had called Prospect Place. The Metropolis Management Act declared, in one of its clauses, that the naming of streets must not be claimed as the right of the builders, but that the Metropolitan Board of Works shall have a voice in the matter. By a later statute, enacted in 1862, this revising power was transferred to the district Boards and parish vestries. The matter has been 'muddled,' to use a homely term, for want of some definite principle. The advisers have been numerous enough; but there has been no guiding authority to transform 'Chaos into Cosmos.' If we look at foreign countries, we see many approximate adoptions of system: At Washington, there are broad roads called Avenues, named after the states towards which they tend; and First, Second, and Third Streets, &c. branching out of them in numerical order. At Philadelphia, most of the streets at right angles to the river Delaware are named after American trees; while those parallel with it are called First, Second, Third, &c. Streets. In the more recent portion of New York, there are Avenues in one direction and Streets in another, the numerals First, Second, &c. being repeated in each series. At Mannheim, when rebuilt after the great war, in strict parallelogramic form, there were no names of streets adopted; there are blocks of houses, each forming a compact square; there is a letter to denote which row a block is in, a figure to denote which block in the row, and another figure to denote the particular house in the block: thus, C 36 is the name of the sixth house in the third block of row or street C—very unpicturesque and unpoetical, but easy to find out. At Paris they quite eclipse us here in London in the application to streets of the names of men who have made themselves famous in literature, science, art, &c. Froissart, Béranger, Laplace, Victor Cousin, Fresnel, Dupin, Palissy, Casimir Delavigne, Vernet, Rubens, Titian, Niepce, D'Alembert, Lalande, Marmontel, De Musset, Talma, Claude Lorraine, Beethoven, Donizetti, Scheffer, Petrarch, Poussin, Bellini, Raphael, Ingres, Delaroche, David—all have such celebrity as street-names can give them. And then the Parisians have to some extent adopted the practice of local groups of names, associated with certain buildings and places—such as the names of Watt, Jouffroy, Papin, and Fulton for streets near one of the railway termini; Cuvier and Buffon, near the Jardin des Plantes; Crébillon, Voltaire, Racine, Molière, and Corneille, near the Odéon.

The Metropolitan Board of Works have been

beset with advisers as to the reformation of the names of metropolitan streets. Mr Gallaway, in a pamphlet published on this subject, proposes that we should retain the King Streets and Queen Streets now so numerous, and append Christian names of actual sovereigns, such as King Henry, King Richard, Queen Eleanor, Queen Catherine Streets, &c.; and that the Church Streets should have another name preceding the word Church, to denote the locality, such as Paddington Church Street, and Limehouse Church Street. Another suggestion is, that the names in any particular district shall denote some of its characteristics; such as maritime names near the Docks, dramatic names near the Theatres, names of eminent judges and lawyers near the Law Courts, names of civil engineers and contractors near the great Railway Stations, names of distinguished surgeons and physicians near the Hospitals, names of military heroes near the Tower, and names of eminent statesmen near the Government Offices and the Houses of Parliament. A third suggestion is, that the name of some great author should be given to the principal street of a district, and the names of his famous works to the minor streets around. Thus, we should have Waverley, Ivanhoe, Kenilworth, Peveril, Antiquary, &c. Streets as satellites around Walter Scott Street; and Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear Streets, and the like around Shakespeare Street. If it had so happened that the great man really lived in one of the streets, this would be a pleasant mode of impressing the fact on the mind. The name of the landowner, and the names of his titles and estates, are so frequently applied to streets, that there is no need to recommend *this* bit of vanity. There was formerly, on the south side of the Strand, a group giving the words George Villiers Duke of Buckingham; George Street is now changed to York Buildings, and Of or Off Alley is gone—we know not whither. Some theorists urge that we ought not to get rid of old names which give information as to the past history and condition of localities; such as Battle Bridge, Whetstone Park, Grange Road, Crabtree Road, Windmill Street, and especially old streets in the City with which there are historical associations.

Houses had signs long before they had numbers; and not merely public-houses, but shops of various kinds. The 'Golden Fleece' was the sign of many a hosier's shop in the old City of London. It has been pleasantly said that a probable address on a love-letter might have assumed some such form as this: 'These for y^e fair Dame Matilda, at y^e Golden Fleece, over against y^e Roaring Lion and Seven Crowns, nigh unto y^e Conduit in Chepe.' At whatever time the practice of numbering houses began, the builders claimed the same sponsorship liberty as in the naming of streets; and occasionally housekeepers take the matter into their own hands in a very independent sort of way. A few years ago, one of the Post-office inspectors, during his perambulations, found the four corners of a new and unfinished street all called No. 1; in another case, where seven builders had constructed seven rows of houses in one street, there were seven repetitions of No. 1 in that street. In a third instance, observing No. 95 between Nos. 14 and 16 in a particular street, he inquired into the anomaly. The good lady of the house told him that No. 95 'was the number of a house she formerly lived at in another street; and it [meaning the brass plate on which the number was engraved]

being a very good one, she thought it would do for her present residence as well as any other!

When the Metropolitan Board of Works took in hand the names of streets, the numbers of the houses passed under review also. In Paris, all the odd numbers are on one side, and the even numbers on the other; if the street is nearly parallel with the Seine, the numbers go *down* the stream, the even numbers on the right hand, and the odd on the left; while in the streets at right angles to the Seine, the numbers go *from* the stream. The same plan was long ago suggested for London; but the Board are adopting it in a modified form. Streets are one by one (and greatly to the puzzlement of those who have not yet become accustomed to the system) having their numbers changed, the even on one side, and the odd on the other; the numbers beginning, in most cases, at the end *nearest* to the *General Post-office*. There is an intelligibility in this plan, certainly; but as rivers are more permanent than post-offices, we prefer the Parisian standard. It has been remarked by a lawyer, that, in the title-deeds of property, houses are often denoted chiefly by their numbers, and that if those numbers are changed, a difficulty of identification might possibly arise; hence he suggests that an owner should be entitled to claim from the board or vestry a certificate under seal, declaring and defining the change of number from the old to the new. One of the assistant-registrars has suggested that every house should have a *parochial* number, to be entered on the parish-books, whether there is any other number or not, and to be painted, at the expense of the parish, on some part of the front of the house.

How to make the numbers of houses more distinctly legible, is a problem on which much ingenuity has been exercised. In Geneva, the numbers are in many cases cut into the curbstones in front of the respective houses. One reformer thinks that the highest and lowest numbers in each street should be painted on the corner-lamps. Another suggests that the street-lamps should have the initials of the postal districts (E.C., N.W., &c.) painted on them; that the corner-lamps should have also the name of the street; and that each lamp should, in addition, have the number of the house immediately opposite to it. It is urged that, with a little care, this might be done without hiding much of the light. Where there is a lamp in the passage of a private house, immediately over the door, the housekeeper would certainly not do amiss to have the number of his house painted on the glass or fanlight.

There has been a good deal of advocacy, in the *Builder* and other periodicals, of a plan for identifying houses with celebrated persons who once lived in them. It is urged that a pleasant addition would be made to the interest with which we perambulate the streets of London, if we could look up and see that this or that great man had lived in this or that house. Boulogne has got '*Ici est mort l'auteur de Gil Blas*'; Rouen, '*Ici est né Pierre Corneille*'; Geneva, '*Ici est né Jean Jacques Rousseau*.' We have done something of the kind at Stratford-on-Avon; and it is contended that London has abundant materials for following out the same plan. We have the '*Czar's Head*' in Great Tower Street, where Peter the Great often went to smoke and drink; the house in Maiden Lane where Voltaire once lodged; the house in Crane Court where the Royal Society held its sittings for seventy

years; the houses in Berkeley Square where Lord Clive and Horace Walpole lived; the house in Bolton Street where the young Pretender once lived; the house in Tavistock Place where Francis Baily 'weighed the earth' by his wonderful pendulum experiments; the house in King Street, St James's, where the present Emperor of the French once lodged when Prince Louis Napoleon; the house in Lower Brook Street in which Handel lived; the house in Gough Square where Dr Johnson wrote the greater part of his Dictionary; the house in Silver Street where Canaletti once lived; Mrs Siddons's residence in Great Marlborough Street, and Chantrey's in Lower Belgrave Place; Newton's association with St Martin's Street, Milton's with Petty France or York Street, Dryden's with Gerrard Street, Prior's with Duke Street, Reynolds's and Hogarth's with Leicester Square, Flaxman's with Buckingham Street, Johnson's with Bolt Court, Goldsmith's with Brick Court, Gibbon's with Bentinck Street, Garrick's with Adelphi Terrace, Lord Somers's with Lincoln's Inn Fields, Lord Mansfield's with King's Bench Walk, Rogers's with St James's Place, Macaulay's with the Albany—and a host of others. In 1863, Mr Ewart proposed in the House of Commons that either the Government Board of Works or the Metropolitan Board should take this matter in hand, and cause inscriptions to be affixed to the fronts of houses associated in any way with the names of distinguished personages. The Chief Commissioner of Works asked—how if the present occupiers of the houses should object? It has since been suggested that the Society of Arts, the Society of Antiquaries, and one of the Archeological Associations should examine all the streets of London, except those of quite modern date; identify such houses as are associated with memories of great men; get a subscribed fund for defraying the cost of tablets; and obtain the consent of owners and occupiers to the placing of such inscribed tablets on the fronts of the houses.

AN AUTUMN EVENING.

Is scattered plumes the floating clouds
Went drifting down the west,
Like barks that in their haven soon
Would moor and be at rest.
The day sank down a monarch red
Upon Night's sable breast.

The wind was all but hushed asleep,
Yet now and then it stirred
A great tree's top, and whispering
Awoke a slumbering bird,
Who half aroused, but only chirped
A song of just a word.

And in the west the rosy light
Spread out a thousand arms,
Each with a torch, whose crimson fire
Stretched o'er the peaceful farms,
And o'er the yellow corn, that lay
Unconscious of all harms.

Then changed into a waste of blue
A desert tract of air,
Where no red clouds, like Indian flowers,
Bore blossoms bright and fair;
And over all, a sense of want
And something lost was there.